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CIVIL AFFAIRS INFORMATION GUIDE

The French Police

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Summary

1. The re-establishment of order after the liberation will be a task of immense difficulty. It can easily fail unless the new regime has its at their command ample and well-equipped police forces staffed with loyal Frenchmen.

2. The Third Republic possessed police forces which were adequate to maintain order and efficient in the repression of crime. They were the local police of the communes, the government-controlled police of the largest cities, a national police force, and military police forces which supplemented the work of civilian police. There was a gradual movement toward centralized control of the police by the national government.

3. During the Vichy administration, control of all police was centralized under the national government. Improvement of police personnel, through the introduction of higher standards of admission, training, and compensation, was planned but never realized. Many patriotic elements in the police were purged, and formations packed with pro-German personnel were created.

4. Notwithstanding the centralization of formal control, many segments of the police remained lukewarm or antagonistic to Vichy politics. This attitude, together with popular resistance to pro-German police and pro-German regulations has brought about a virtual breakdown of law and order under Vichy.

THE FRENCH POLICE

I. POLICE OF THE THIRD REPUBLIC

The character and organization of the police under the Third Republic remain important, despite the many changes which have been made. Vichy innovations have not obliterated the essential framework which existed under the Republic. Moreover, the French may be expected to abrogate many of these innovations and to dissolve Vichy organs which do not disperse of their own accord at the time of the liberation.

A. Police Organization

Detailed explanations of the police system of the Republic can be found in the OSS-PWE French Basic Handbook (secret), Part I, Chapter V, and in the Civil Affairs Handbook on France (restricted), Section Fourteen. The latter document includes an organizational chart. In the present Guide, it will be sufficient to review briefly the outlines of organization.

1. Main Elements in Police Administration. Descriptions of the French police are often confusing because the same names describe a number of different groups. This is true, for example, of the terms "judicial police" (Police judiciaire), "municipal police" (police municipale), "administrative police" (police administrative), and "state police" (police d'état). Some elements in the system were given new names under Vichy. Consequently, the outlines of the system can be more readily grasped if purely descriptive terms are used.

Four main elements in the police system of the Third Republic must be distinguished. They are:

The local police

The government-controlled city police

The national police

The military police

a. Local Police. Every commune of France, excepting a few of the largest cities, had its own police force, supported and controlled by the municipality. This was usually called the "Municipal Police" (police municipale). In the least populated communes, it would consist only of one or two rural Constables (gardes champêtres); in urban areas, it might be a large force comprising both patrolmen (gardiens de la paix) and detectives (inspecteurs or agents de la sûreté).

b. Government-Controlled City Police. In Paris, Lyon, Marseille, and a dozen other thickly populated centers, the city police forces were under the control of the national government, instead of being under the mayor of the commune. In most of these areas, the prefect for the department was the commander of the police, but in Paris a special Prefect of Police had been set up, directly responsible to the Minister of the Interior. The nationalized city police forces were usually known as "State Police" (police d'état), although this term was equally descriptive of other government police not assigned to any particular city.

c. National Police. A national police agency was located in the Ministry of the Interior. It grew in importance -- gradually under the Third Republic, and rapidly

under Vichy. Prior to 1934 it was called the General Safety Administration (direction de la sûreté générale); from 1934 to 1941, the National Safety Administration (sûreté nationale); and since then, National Police Administration (police nationale).

d. Military Police. France has traditionally employed military formations in functions which would be performed in English-speaking countries by civilian police. Under the Third Republic, the military units employed in this way were the following:

The Army Gendarmes (gendarmerie, sometimes qualified as nationale, terrestriale, or départementale), who patrolled rural highways and assisted local police to quell disorders.

The Naval Gendarmes (gendarmerie maritime), who policed the principal ports and harbors.

The Republican Guard (garde républicaine), which served as a presidential bodyguard and in other ceremonial functions.

The Mobile Republican Guard (garde républicaine mobile) often called simply the Mobile Guard, which was called upon in serious disorders, such as those provoked by strikes.

2. Control of Police. Almost all the police forces of Republican France were subject to control from a variety of sources. In the local police, most of the personnel were hired by the mayor but could be dismissed only by the prefect. The chiefs and deputy chiefs of police (commissaires centraux, and commissaires) were appointed and dismissed by the Minister of the Interior. A local chief of police might be ordered by the

mayor to put more men on the patrol of markets, by the prefect to improve the patrol of streets, and by the district attorney (procureur de la République) to investigate a particular crime. He would also receive general instructions on procedure from the office of the national government police. He was bound by all these orders, and had to reconcile them as best he could.

In the government-controlled police forces of the larger cities, powers of hiring and firing were divided between the departmental prefect and the Ministry of the Interior. The mayors (except in Paris), the prefects, and the district attorneys all had claims on the services of these police.

Powers over the national police were largely centralized in a director-general. But one branch of the national police force, the Mobile Police, was also subject to orders from the attorneys-general (procureurs générales) of the various appeal districts. The latter officials could also requisition the services of the Gendarmes and of the Mobile Guard although these groups were subject to the Minister of War with respect to appointments and dismissals.

B. Operations of the French Police

The principal functions performed by the French police were maintenance of order, detection of criminals, and collection of information. The last function has come to be regarded in recent years as independent of the other two.

1. Maintenance of Order. The French distinguished sharply between what they called the "preventive" function of the

police -- control of crowds, direction of traffic, inspection of amusements, and the like -- and the "repressive" function of criminal detection. Officials charged primarily with preventive functions were described by different and confusing names. The classic term was "administrative police" (police administrative); but the term "administrative" was also used to designate the branches which supervised personnel, finance, and equipment. In the Paris police force the preventive force was known as the "municipal police" (police municipale), but this was also a technical term to describe those police forces which were under the control of the communes. After the reorganization of 1941, the preventive forces became known as "security police" (police de la sécurité). Police d'ordre -- the police who keep order -- is probably the best of the terms that has been evolved.

Under the Republic, maintenance of order was primarily a function of the uniformed patrolmen (gardiens de la paix), aided in emergencies by the Gendarmes or the Mobile Guard. The job was apparently well done and occasioned little criticism, except for the practice of "preventive arrest." This procedure consisted in seizing persons believed likely to provoke riots, and detaining them until the danger was past, without filing formal charges. It was illegal in France, as in the United States [illegible] and was widely condemned by Frenchmen.

2. Detection of Criminals.

a. Agencies of Detection. The primary responsibility for the detection of ordinary criminals fell upon the detective bureaus of the urban police forces, commonly called "judicial police" (police judiciaire) or "safety police" (police de la sûreté). These bureaus were highly developed in the cities which had government-controlled police forces; that of Paris was as powerful as the National Safety Administration, and there was a vigorous rivalry between the two. In the cities having only local police forces crime detection lagged, and in the rural communes it was notoriously weak.

A nation-wide detective agency was supplied by the National Safety Administration (direction de la sûreté nationale). To aid the local police, it established its Mobile Police (police mobile) in various regions and tracked down criminals who operated over a wide area. It also maintained sections to handle special problems, such as railway robberies, international crime rings, subversive conspiracies, and financial frauds.

On the whole, the French police were exceedingly efficient in the prosecution of crime. Occasional failures, as in the Stavisky case which precipitated the fall of a cabinet, had far greater political consequences than would be expected in the United States.

b. Oral Examination of Suspects. The art of interrogating suspects and witnesses was highly developed among the French police. They did not aim to obtain a confession, since it had little legal validity, but to gather more evidence for a complete picture of the crime.

This practice ~~which is followed by American police officers without legal sanction~~ was expressly authorized in France. The authority to conduct oral examinations with written minutes which are admissible in evidence, was conferred by law on many officials, including rural Constables, officers of the Gendarmes and of the Mobile Police, chiefs of police, Justices of the Peace, Examining Judges (juges d'instruction) and members of the parquet or public ministry. Officials having this statutory power were designated as "Judicial Police" (police judiciaire). In this sense, the "Judicial Police" were a quite different body of men than those constituting the detective bureaus which were known by the same name. They might be more aptly called "police examiners."

The authority to take testimony varied somewhat according to circumstances and the rank of the officer involved. While the Examining Judges had plenary powers of investigation, police officers were ordinarily limited to taking the voluntary statements of disinterested witnesses. But in cases of "fresh pursuit" of crime (flagrant délit), witnesses might be summoned and the suspect interrogated by chiefs of police, District Attorneys, and others.

As in other countries, oral examination was not restricted in practice to those having legal authority to perform it, and "third degree" methods were occasionally used. Prolonged interrogations were entirely proper under French law. In fact, the extensive powers conferred by law on the French police made it possible for them to achieve a high degree of success in criminal detection without necessarily exceeding their legal bounds.

c. Scientific Methods. The better organized forces of the large cities, and the national police forces, neglected none of the modern police techniques. Paris, for example, had chemical and toxicological laboratories, and the best fingerprint index in France, not excepting that of the National Safety Administration. French bureaus of identification (bureaux de l'identité judiciaire) persisted in the Bertillon method of identification by physical measurements after its disuse in other countries, but they did use fingerprinting.

In addition to scientific techniques, the French police sometimes employed the age-old method of getting "tips" from informers (indicateurs) who were themselves members of the underworld. This alliance of law with outlaws was bitterly condemned by French critics of police administration under the Third Republic.

3. Collection of Information. In the collection of information

for general reference, the police had gone much farther in France than in English-speaking countries, or perhaps than in any other democratic nation. Not only were files kept on the development of political parties, labor unions, and other organizations, but also on all individuals who had any importance in public life. From these files, the government in power could and often did obtain exhaustive information about its opponents. This phase of informational activities, therefore, became known as "political policing" (police politique), and was condemned by many commentators on French government.

The collection of information was performed chiefly by the Section of Inquiries and Investigations (section des informations et enquêtes) in the National Safety Administration, by the General Information Administration (direction des renseignements généraux) in the Paris Police, and by the detective bureaus of other large cities.

C. Personnel of the French Police

1. Uniform. No uniform was worn by most of the office employees and detectives. In Paris, patrolmen wore uniforms which consisted of a dark blue coat or cape, dark blue trousers with red stripes on the sides, and military-type caps (képis) which had flat tops, straight sides, a silver badge, and silver stripes indicative of rank. Similar uniforms were worn by patrolmen in other cities.

The various branches of military police were distinguished from the civil police by their lighter colored "gendarme-blue" trousers, which contrasted with their black coats and black Sam Browne belts. Their caps also were of military type with black sides and blue tops. They had summer uniforms of khaki, and showy full dress uniforms, including plumed helmets, for parades.

2. Selection. Selection of policemen in the rural communes and smaller cities followed no fixed rules and was often tinged with the politics of the local mayor. In the larger cities, particularly those whose police forces were government-controlled, and in the National Safety Administration, educational prerequisites and competitive examinations had been installed. The merit system was somewhat encumbered by rules preferring war veterans. The military police were chosen by the army from its own ranks.

3. Education. In addition to the educational prerequisites for admission to the force, Paris and Lyon maintained excellent police schools in collaboration with the universities of these cities. The establishment of a national police school under the National Safety Administration was contemplated by a law of 1934, but it had not yet materialized when war broke out in 1939.

4. Number. Complete data on the number of police in the Third Republic are not available. The total personnel of all forces probably exceeded one hundred thousand. The largest

units were the Paris police numbering about seventeen thousand, the Gendarmes numbering about the same, and the Mobile Guard, which counted about twenty thousand troopers.

5. Titles. The various names by which members of the French police were called can be conveniently summarized by a list giving their approximate English equivalents.

Commissaire centrale	Chief of police, police commissioner
Commissaire, commissaire d'arrondissement	Deputy or district chief of police
Inspecteur, chef des gardiens de la paix, or inspecteur, chef de la sûreté	Captain
Sous-inspecteur	Lieutenant
Brigadier	Sergeant
Sous-brigadier	Corporal
Agent, gardien de la paix, "flic"	Policeman, patrolman, "cop"
Agent de la sûreté, inspecteur, "roussin," "mouchard"	Detective, "dick," "snooper"

II. THE FRENCH POLICE UNDER VICHY

A. Modifications in the Republican Police System

Nearly every branch of the French police system has been radically overhauled by Vichy, and new branches of police have been introduced. The principal changes are summarized under the headings below.

1. German Influence on the French Police. According to the terms of the armistice, the French police, even in the occupied zone, remained under French control. But German

police formations were maintained for the protection of German military forces and were accorded the right of arresting anyone offending or menacing the occupying power. They could, therefore, threaten to seize or search if the French police failed to act, and the armistice commissions could demand that "order" be maintained more effectually for the benefit of the Germans. Consequently, they established an effective surveillance of French police activities, and directives of German military authorities had to be carried out by French police officials.

In unoccupied France, the sovereignty of Vichy did not prevent infiltration of the Gestapo, which had planted numerous agents long before the invasion of Southern France in November 1942. After that time, German military police and the SS were reported active throughout France, and Gestapo offices were openly maintained in the chief towns of most of the departments. Apparently, Gestapo pressure on French police was first applied indirectly through the armistice commissions and through the administration at Vichy. But the Gestapo grew rapidly bolder, making immediate demands on local police officers. In the fall of 1943, Vichy advised its local police officers to cooperate freely with Gestapo inspections and to respond frankly to Gestapo inquiries.

2. Purging and Subordination of the Military Police. Under Vichy, as under the Third Republic, the military police were the symbolic protectors of the nation against its enemies from within and without.

The Republican Guard (Garde Républicaine), which had appeared as a presidential escort on formal occasions, was adopted by Pétain as his own guard. Since the Republic was dead, the escort was renamed the Marshal's Guard (garde du maréchal; also called garde Pétain); its members, who had formally taken oaths to defend the Republic, were now required to swear to defend Pétain. At about the same time, its membership was reduced from three thousand to two hundred; only those regarded as loyal to the Vichy regime were retained. In 1943, an increase in the membership of the Marshal's Guard was authorized, but vacancies were apparently filled with pro-Vichy men rather than with former guardsmen.

The Mobile Guard of the Third Republic (Garde Mobile Républicaine) was disbanded in the occupied zone of France, but continued operations in the South zone. Its name was changed to the "Guard." It ceased to be the government's principal organ for suppressing outbreaks of violence; new organizations of Vichy origin -- the Mobile Reserves and later the Militia -- became more conspicuous in this field. The guard appears to have assisted these organizations in a subordinate capacity. Reports on the Guard's loyalty are conflicting.

The Gendarmes have maintained their former organization relatively intact, due principally to the difficulty of replacing units so accustomed to maintaining order and to policing the highways in rural areas. They have given decided

evidence of loyalty to the cause of an independent France. The Gendarmes failed so signally to suppress the maquis that much of this work had to be taken over by the Militia. Speaking of a particular Gendarme brigade, a Resistance representative declared: "It deserves well of the country, as it facilitates by every means the hiding of defaulting workers and the work of the patriots." Their liberationist spirit is probably traceable in part to their military background, most of them having been members of the regular army and permeated with hatred of the Germans.

3. The National Police. Through a succession of laws and decrees dating from April 1941, the National Police organization greatly increased its power and influence. Formerly known as the Sûreté Nationale, it now took the name of Police Nationale. The change of name served to emphasize the expansion of its activities -- formerly detective or informational in the main -- to include the maintenance of order, and the implementing of policies of the National Revolution. Special services to stamp out secret societies and communism, to restrict the activities of Jews, and to regulate travel and communication were established. A Public Security Service (Service de la Sécurité Publique) was set up to coordinate and reinforce the activities of local and regional police in maintaining order; it also commanded the new Mobile Reserve Groups (Groupes Mobiles de Réserves), which were to serve as shock troops in suppressing riots or strikes. This formation

commonly called the GMR, thus displaced in large measure the Mobile Guard, a military police unit which had performed similar functions in the past, but which apparently proved insufficiently loyal to Vichy to be continued as a key organ. The GMR is decidedly collaborationist, and has an authorized strength of nearly twenty thousand men.

Older branches of the National Police continued to exist -- the Service of Territorial Surveillance (surveillance du territoire), the Detective Service (police judiciaire), and the General Information Administration (direction des renseignements généraux). Their members are reported to have retained their devotion to French independence; despite Vichy's wishes, those sections which in pre-war times were charged with spying on fascist or other pro-German activities have continued to do so -- particularly the Territorial Surveillance and one of the detective sections known as Anti-National Movements (menées antinationales).

In 1944 the National Police became part of a still larger concentration of nation-wide police control, described below.

4. Creation of Regional Police. Although the National Safety Administration was said by some writers to stand at the apex of the police system of the Republic, this relationship was more evident on organizational charts than in practice. The local police of most of the communes were much more directly controlled by the mayors than by the Director of National

Safety, and the Paris Prefect of Police was in many respects more powerful than the Director. In an effort to bridge the wide gap between national and local police, and to make the latter more responsive to national direction, Vichy established regional police.

The establishment of regional police was a part of the reorganization of all local government along regional lines, undertaken by the Vichy government in 1941. With respect to the police, the regional system had two aspects. First, there was a force of Regional Police, with one branch for the maintenance of order (police de la sécurité), one for criminal detection (police de la sûreté, or police judiciaire), and one for information (renseignements généraux). All three branches were enabled to operate throughout the region, which consisted of several departments.

Second, a great deal of power was lodged in the chief of the Regional Police, called the Police Intendant (intendant de la police) or Intendant to Keep Order (intendant du maintien de l'ordre). As head of the Regional Police, he could act directly to enforce the law throughout the region, and also to spy on local officials, including the prefects, and report on their loyalty to the Vichy government. What was more important was his power to direct the activities of local police throughout the area; the prefects' police powers became subject to the superior command of the intendant. The mayors' powers of appointment and control also passed to the Regional

Intendant in all communes with more than ten thousand inhabitants. In this way, police of all but the smallest centers became in effect government-controlled police -- police d'état.

Early in 1943, a further step was taken in building up the intendant's powers in the regions of northern and western France which had been part of the original "occupied zone." The old organization of police by communes was discarded; in the new organization, all local police in these areas were organized by regions, under the intendants. The regions were divided into "districts," which were usually co-extensive with departments, and the districts into "circumscriptions," each of which included one or more communes. The intendant was entrusted with practically all the powers which the prefect and mayor had shared under the Republic.

5. Nationalization of City Police. In the first stage of police reorganization, in 1942, a number of local police forces of cities in the occupied zone were nationalized, as had been done in some of the largest cities under the Third Republic. These government-controlled police (polices d'état) were soon swallowed up in the larger units of regional police described above. The older nationalized police forces of Paris, Lyon, and Marseilles remained unaffected.

6. Local Police. In the "unoccupied zone" of France, the local police were but little affected by Vichy innovations.

The immunity to reform which had characterized them for a hundred years under the Republic served them in good stead under the National Revolution. Even the law establishing Regional Police which purported to bring them under the orders of the Intendant, provided that the mayors' powers of appointment and dismissal should remain unaffected in towns with a population of less than ten thousand. Nor do reports indicate that the regional police, who are fully occupied with more acute problems, have concerned themselves greatly with the police operations of small communes.

Except for pro-Nazi higher officials, the attitude of the local police has been marked by indifference or opportunism. They did not oppose collaboration while Germany was victorious, but neither did they vigorously repress resistance. While they will probably take no great risks for the Allies, they are unlikely to oppose the liberation, and may be expected to cooperate with the authorities who are set up after the Germans are expelled.

7. Auxiliary Policemen. A symptom of the collapse of law and order under Vichy has been the necessity which arose, chiefly during the summer and fall of 1943, for drafting ordinary citizens into police service. The organized Resistance was so successful during this period in attacks on railroad installations and food stocks that all the regular police forces were unable to cope with them. As a last resort the Vichy government ordered local mayors to commandeer the services

of ordinary citizens, who were forced to patrol the railway lines, especially at bridges and tunnels, to guard the crops from sabotage at harvest time, and to protect other objectives. These units, which may be compared with the posses of English-speaking countries, were known as "railroad track guards" (gardes des voies ferrées), and harvest guards (gardes messiers). The zeal of these untrained and unwilling guardians of property seems to have been no greater than one would expect and does not appear to have checked resistance activities.

8. Police Schools. The project of a national police school which the Republic had planned was realized by Vichy in the establishment of an institution at St. Cyr-au-Mont-d'Or, which was to compare in excellence with the foremost technical schools of the land, including the military academy. In its upper division it has trained men to occupy positions as chiefs of police (commissaires) or higher. A lower, or "technical" division trains subaltern personnel. It has been made an instrument of the National Revolution, however, and loyalty to Pétain is the foremost prerequisite for admission.

Vichy has also planned the establishment of regional schools to give shorter courses to patrolmen. Schools for this purpose are reported to exist at Camp d'Aincourt, Périgueux, Pontivy, and Uriage. There may be others. Of those mentioned, the last two seem to be devoted to specialized training. The school at Périgueux is under German direction and instructs

in the methods of the Gestapo. The school at Uriage trains the membership of the ~~Vichy~~ pro-Nazi Militia.

B. Supremacy of the Police: a Vichy Innovation

As cleavages in ~~Vichy~~ France opened wider, it was no longer enough for the police to be instruments of the government, subject to the Ministers of War and of the Interior. They had to be made a political force independent of the government, and capable of being used against high government officials, if the Vichy autocracy was to survive. To some extent, this tendency was manifested by the creation of the Regional Intendants, who could spy on the Regional Prefectures. It became much more pronounced with two other developments -- the creation of the Militia, and the concentration of police control.

1. The Militia. Ostensibly, the French Militia (milice française) was to function like the National Guard in the United States -- to protect the nation against attack from any quarter. But it cannot be fully understood without knowing something of its history.

In 1940, Pétain dissolved all existing war veterans' associations which were not purely benevolent, and set up the new Veterans' Legion (légion des combattants). Sponsored by the government, the Legion was supplied with a party line which supported Pétain and the National Revolution and decried as outworn the doctrines of democracy. In January 1942, this

political instrument of collaboration was permitted to found a subordinate organization called the SOL. Its full name -- Service d'Ordre Legionnaire -- might be translated as "Legionary Service for Keeping Order." Many of its early members came from the French fascist group PPF (Parti Populaire Français), and its leader was an outstanding French pro-Nazi, Joseph Darnand. Although it was associated with the Tricolor Legion, which recruited soldiers to fight Russia, the SOL was more concerned with the domestic front. It pursued without legal authorization a campaign of counter-terrorism against the Resistance and beat up suspected Gaullists whom the police had neglected.

In January 1943, the government announced the formation of a new organization, the Militia, under Joseph Darnand. Actually, the Militia was made up of former members of the SOL, which had become very unpopular through its strong-arm activities, and which now disappeared. The Militia received a large government subsidy and trained its members at government camps in the use of arms and in methods of guerrilla or anti-guerrilla warfare. By the fall of 1943, units of the Militia were conducting armed campaigns to stamp out the Resistance. Formerly, this had been done without zeal and without success by the Gendarmes.

2. Concentration of Police Control. Under the Republic the military police were commanded by the Minister Secretary of War (or, in the case of the Naval Gendarmes, by the Minister Secretary of the Navy). Other police were under the Minister Secretary of the

Interior, or under local officers -- chiefly the mayors. The legislation of Pétain and Darlan in 1941 made no change in the control of military police, although it did increase the power of the Minister of the Interior over local forces.

In 1942, after Laval returned to power in Vichy, and while Darlan was still the head of the Ministries of the Army and the Navy, control of the military police was shifted from these departments to the Ministry of the Interior, of which Laval was the head. Thus Laval was given control of nearly forty thousand semi-military forces, in addition to the civilian police already under his control. Since the regular army was disbanded, he commanded personally most of the armed forces of France. The only important exception was the Militia, headed by Darnand.

In January 1944, even this division of power was ended. Darnand was given a newly-created office -- Secretary General for the Maintenance of Order. He took over all of Laval's police authority and retained his former leadership of the Militia. The economic police, who enforce price and rationing rules, were shifted to his control. He was also authorized to establish courts martial for offenses threatening the security of the state. In effect, he had the power of life and death over all Frenchmen.

C. Operations of the Vichy Police

The authoritarian government which Vichy aimed to establish required a vast expansion of police activities. In

addition to all their former duties, the police were obliged to issue identity cards to all the inhabitants of France, and to inspect them constantly. They had also to list all the Jews and Free-masons, and to enforce the special laws pertaining to these groups. Police had to be notified of all changes of address. They had to issue permits for changes of address to foreigners and, in strategic areas, to all inhabitants. Price, production, and consumption regulations had to be enforced. Surveillance of political and professional organizations had to be increased.

During 1940, 1941, and the first part of 1942, the Vichy police appeared to be grappling with their increased problems fairly successfully. But since the latter part of 1942 there has been a progressive degeneration and, in the second half of 1943, a virtual collapse of law enforcement. Widespread sabotage has added to their troubles. Riotous disorders have taken place in some localities; as a result, police stations, streets, and public places have had to be fortified with barbed wire. Thefts by night have become so numerous as to require special courts, and thefts by day have been committeed by citizens impersonating police. Vichy-controlled newspapers complain of police timidity, provoked by threats of reprisal broadcast by foreign radio stations and by the underground papers. One of the Vichy-controlled journals announced late in 1943, "The French government cannot put up any longer with the murder of police officials and city mayors."

D. Personnel of the Vichy Police

The laws and decrees issued in 1941 for the reform of the police set high standards, both physical and educational, for the police staff. Higher officers were to hold university diplomas, and to receive technical training in the national police school at St. Cyr-au-Mont-d'Or. Subordinate personnel was to be trained in regional schools. Extensive curricula of studies were planned.

The scarcity of manpower, together with the unwillingness of patriotic Frenchmen to enforce Vichy decrees against their countrymen, have necessitated "temporary" suspension of the high personal requirements. Ruffians and criminals have been accepted, especially in the highly trusted Mobile Reserves and Militia. A shortage of personnel exists despite exemption from the labor draft for Vichy police.

The police forces of Vichy are believed to be more numerous than those of the Republic. They are estimated at more than 135,000, as compared with about 100,000 before the war. A decree of 1943 authorized 25,000 police in the Paris force, compared with about 17,000 in 1939, but actual strength under Vichy usually falls far short of authorized strength.

Attempts have been made to relieve the manpower shortage by employing women for certain police duties, but the number of policewomen has remained low.

The uniform regulations were changed in 1941 so that higher police officers wear black uniforms (like the Germans) instead of dark blue. The subordinate personnel continues to wear dark blue, apparently without the red stripe on the trousers.

The Vichy police have frequently said that they need increased armament to combat the Resistance, but the Germans have limited most of them to pistols. Some of the Gendarmes, however, have been armed with helmets and rifles for expeditions against guerrillas.

III. SECURITY PROBLEMS OF THE LIBERATION

A. Organizational Problems

The liberation of France is likely to be accompanied by a strong reaction against all the measures which have been taken by the Germans and by the government which operated under German protection at Vichy. The new civil authorities are quite likely to take the view that the Vichy government was unconstitutional and its acts void.

1. Police Formations Which Are Hostile to the Allies.

Though the German police organizations -- the Gestapo, Military Police (Feldgendarmerie), and SS -- will disappear when the Allied armies reoccupy France, these agencies are likely to leave agents in their wake, who will have to be rooted out.

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Certain French organizations created by Vichy have been packed with men who can be relied on to oppose the liberation of France from the German regime. They include:

a. The powerful Militia whose pro-Nazi members have been entrusted with the job of hunting out and shooting down their countrymen in Resistance movements.

b. The Mobile Reserves who have been infused with doctrines of Hitler's "New Order," and have been used specifically to repress French Resistance.

c. Special units in the National Police and in the police forces of Paris and other large cities, organized for the suppression of Communist, Jewish, and Masonic activities.

In addition, in all branches of the police, personnel trained in the new schools of police are likely to be anti-Republic and loyal to Vichy, the National Revolution, and the Nazis.

2. Formations Which May Be Useful to the New Regime.

Not all the police formations created by Vichy will necessarily be valueless. Among those which are likely to be useful, after necessary changes in personnel, are the Regional Police, the nationalized

police (police d'état) of some of the large cities, and the posses of railroad and harvest guards.

The decision to be made in regard to these organizations will be exceedingly difficult. Since the Regional Police and the government-controlled local police have been organized for purposes of collaborationist government, they have been manned, as far as possible, with pro-Vichy persons who will distrust and even oppose the re-establishment of republican government. If the organizations are maintained, a substantial restaffing will be unavoidable; it may be easier to abolish them. Moreover, their association with collaboration will make them targets of the hatred which has been directed against Vichy and the Nazis. Yet if they are abolished, they are likely to be re-established later, in view of the genuine needs which these organizations fill. The creation of comparable organizations was frequently proposed under the Third Republic.

Since the posses are not permanent groups but are summoned and dismissed according to the needs of the hour, it will be a simple matter to dispose of them under their present names. But the authorities should be prepared for the necessity of reviving them, in whatever form proves most useful, for the temporary needs of the country. It seems reasonably certain that the shortage of manpower will result in a need for supplementing the police, from time to time, with ordinary citizens. Moreover, various resistance groups

have plans for assisting in the re-establishment of order when the Germans are driven out; they might be effectively used as posses for special purposes.

The police schools, likewise, will probably merit continuation after the liberation, at least the national school at St.- Cyr-au-Mont-d'Or. If they are retained, changes in personnel and in program will be necessary.

3. The Command of Police Organizations. The arrangement under which all police forces are under a single head (Darnand), dissociated from civil administration, will call for correction. It is likely that the Secretariat for the Maintenance of Order will be abolished and the prefects and police chiefs will be made directly responsible to the Minister of the Interior, without the intervention of a super-police commander. Presumably the military police will also be restored to the Ministries of War and of the Navy.

The control over local police by a regional Intendant is another feature of the Vichy regime which may be doomed by a return to republican traditions. But this problem is part of a larger one -- whether the ninety departments should be integrated for all administrative purposes into larger "regions."

B. Personnel Problems

1. Importance of Police Personnel. Following the liberation, reliability of police personnel will assume an importance second only to military operations. The power of French police to help or to hinder the occupying authorities after liberation will be even greater than would be the power of English and American police. Through their informational activities, they have knowledge of the attitudes and conduct of all the important figures in the country. They also keep files on political and economic groups and on movements of foreign origin. Their power to arrest and examine witnesses is much less restricted than that of British or American police.

It will be vital to the new regime to have at its command police who are not only honest, but also diligent and devoted to the authorities whom they represent.

2. Eliminating Unsafe Personnel. For a number of reasons, it will probably be impracticable to eliminate undesirable elements through the agency of an investigating commission deliberating judicially on the evidence against each member of the force. The best evidence will be in the informational files of the police. There will be no time for delay. Attitudes will be as important as overt acts.

The authorities in power will have only one practicable course. They will need to install police chiefs of unquestioned loyalty, and give them authority to dismiss, suspend, or transfer to other posts all members of their forces. These police chiefs will need immediate access to the police files, if they are to protect the government against disorder and espionage. The excesses to which such absolute authority might lead in normal times will be tempered by the acute shortage of police manpower; this will operate to limit dismissals to the minimum consistent with the security of the new regime.

3. Recruiting New Personnel. The problem of police manpower will be acute for several reasons. Millions of Frenchmen are already detained in Germany as prisoners or laborers; more will be taken by the Germans before they evacuate. Agriculture and industry will urgently need workers, and the French army will need to increase its numbers.

Among the limited manpower available, the police will have to select with care those whose attitudes make them

reliable. It will therefore be impracticable to establish, in the first instance, rigid physical and educational standards. It may even be necessary to obtain the release of soldiers for regular police duty. A source of personnel which will certainly be used consists of the former members of the police, civil, or military, who were dismissed by Vichy on account of anti-German sentiments.

4. Use of Foreign Personnel.

While the use of non-French military police among the civilian population may be required in limited situations, undesirable effects may be expected to flow from it. In two to four years of occupation, the French have learned the art of underground activities. Although they have learned to hate German control, their feeling may readily be directed against any foreign control. Their suspicion of English-speaking people has been carefully nourished throughout the occupation by German propaganda. They will expect to police themselves.

C. Ability to Maintain Order

1. Dimensions of the Problem. The task of maintaining order under the Vichy regime was begun with the advantages of an established government, the leadership of a famous marshal of France, the armed support of Germany, and negligible internal opposition. Nevertheless the maintenance of order has degenerated until it has virtually collapsed.

The task of the new regime after liberation will begin under far less auspicious circumstances. The armed forces will be fully occupied with the enemy. Hostile groups, both French and German, will be at large throughout the country. Near-famine conditions will exist in some localities until relieved by the occupying force.

Complications will not come solely from the outright pro-fascists. Supporters of the new regime, if dissatisfied with the official measures taken against collaborationists, may attempt to take the law into their own hands. Many loyal Frenchmen who have never known rationing except under a distrusted government may continue the black market habit. If there is doubt of the stability of the new regime, any political group which considers itself insufficiently represented may attempt to organize violent opposition. Finally, the criminal profession will have had unequalled opportunities, in the disorder under the Vichy regime and the chaos of invasion, to strengthen its organization and its armament.

2. Factors Affecting the Result. The result of the regime's attempt to maintain order will depend in large part on factors other than the police. Among these will be the consistency with which they are supported by the military forces, the degree of confidence which they win from the French people, and the availability of supplies of food and clothing to relieve distress. Assuming that these factors are reasonably favorable, the needs with respect to the police forces may be summarized as follows:

a. Number of Police. At the outset, the authorities will need police forces which are substantially more numerous than those which existed in the same area before the war. After order has been re-established, a reduction to the pre-war complement may be practical.

b. Nationality of the Police. For the policing of French civilians, only French police can be expected to receive a high degree of cooperation.

c. Power over Personnel. Officials in charge of the police will need wide powers to recruit new personnel, and to transfer, suspend, or discharge former members of the force.

d. Equipment. The police will need modern weapons and motorized equipment.